

Message Text

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43

ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 IO-14 ISO-00 SWF-02 EB-11 IGA-02 CIAE-00

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O P 121445Z APR 74

FM USINT ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0358

USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

8TH LOG COMD CAMP DARBY LEGHORN ITALY PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: FLOODS IN ALGERIA

REFS: (A) STATE 074518 (B) USMISSION GENEVA 2322 (C) ALGIERS 0701

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. TORRENTIAL RAINS MARCH 31 AND APRIL 1 IN GRANDE-KABYLIA CAUSED EXTENSIVE DAMAGE. MORE RAIN APRIL 4 AND 5 HAVE HINDERED REPAIRS. EARLY, TENTATIVE REPORTS BY MINISTRIES OF INTERIOR AND PUBLIC WORKS PLACE PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS AT AROUND 7.5 MILLION DOLLARS.

2. GOA HAS NOT EMPHASIZED DISASTER IN LOCAL PRESS, BUT IS FACTUALLY REPORTING EXTENT OF DAMAGE. FROM REVIEW OF PRESS FOLLOWING FIGURES ARE AVAILABLE: DEAD ABOUT 50. IN THREE OF SEVEN REPORTING DIARIE IN KABYLIE AREA 2250 HOUSES DESTROYED AND 13,344 VICTIMS. WATER IN USUALLY DRY RIVER BEDS ROSE TO MORE THAN 140 FEET. EXTENSIVE ROAD, BRIDGE AND WATER SUPPLY DAMAGE.

3. GOA HAS PROMISED UN PERMREP WRITTEN REPORT ON DAMAGE, BUT IT HAS NOT YET BEEN RECEIVED.

4. ON APRIL 5 UN REP WAS FIRST CONTACTED ORALLY BY MINISTRIES OF INTERIOR AND PUBLIC WORKS. HE POINTED OUT EMERGENCY
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RELIEF PRIMARILY HUMANITARIAN AND NOT FOR REPAIR OF PUBLIC

INFRASTRUCTURE AND NOTIFIED UNDRO. UNDRO INITIATED REQUEST TO GOA FOREIGN MINISTRY WHICH ON APRIL 11 GAVE STATEMENT TO UN PERM REP OF NEED FOR SHELTER ASSISTANCE FOR 13,000 HOMELESS VICTIMS. GOA FOR MIN STATEMENT DOES NOT REQUEST EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE, BUT PUTS UNDRO ON NOTICE OF NEED.

5. UN PERMREP BELIEVES UN COORDINATOR OF DISASTER RELIEF HAS AUTHORIZED EXPENDITURE OF DOLS 20,000 FOR SHELTER ASSISTANCE IN GRAND E-KABLYIA. THIS HE UNDERSTANDS, WILL BE DONE THROUGH UNICEF PURCHASE OF 150 TENTS, PROBABLY IN FRANCE, WHICH AIR ALGERIE WILL FLY FREE TO ALGIERS. RED CRESENT AND GOA SERVICE PROTECTION CIVIL WILL DISTRIBUTE TENTS IN ALGERIA. THEY HAVE GOOD REPUTATION IN ALGERIA, NOTE SAHEL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

6. VISITORS ON MAIN ROADS NEAR GRANDE-KABYLIA HAVE SEEN MANY SIGNS OF INFRA-STRUCTURE, DAMAGE, BUT WASHED OUT ROADS HAVE SO FAR PRECLUDED FIRST-HAND VIEW OF DAMAGE IN MORE REMOTE GRANDE-KABYLIA AREA, SO USINT HAS NO FIRST-HAND DATA. SINCE AREA IS EXTREMELY MOUNTAINOUS AS WELL AS HEAVILY POPULATED (ABOUT 2 MILLION) BELIEVE FIGURE OF 13,000 HOMELESS IS PROBABLY ACCURATE. END UNCLASSIFIED

7. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. IN CIRCUMSTANCES USINT BELIEVES SMALL, QUICK SHELTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM WOULD BE HUMANITARIAN ACT IN FACE OF CLEAR NEED ARISING OUT OF DISASTER CAUSED BY HEAVY RAINS AND FLOODING. SUGGEST USG OFFER TO SUPPLY GOA VIA RED CRESCENT 100-137 SIX-PERSON FAMILY TENTS AVAILABLE IN AID DISASTER RELIEF STOCKPILE CAMP DARBY ITALY. SUGGEST USG OFFER DELIVER TENTS TO ROME AIRPORT FOR AIR ALGERIE TO FLY AT THEIR EXPENSE TO ALGIERS FOR DISTRIBUTION BY RED CRESCENT.

8. BASED ON PAST GOA EXPERIENCE, DISASTER ASSISTANCE FROM USG WOULD GET LITTLE OR NOT PUBLICITY, BUT WOULD BE EFFECTIVE FOLLOW-UP TO PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND USEFUL FOREIGN POLICY STEP. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE.
SIMPSON

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